

THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BRITISH INSECTS

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BENHS representatives to JCCBI

The JCCBI consists of six societies, the British Entomological and Natural History Society, the Royal Entomological Society, the Amateur Entomologists' Society, the Balfour-Browne Club, the British Dragonfly Society and the British Butterfly Conservation Society. There are also a number of regional representatives and observers from organizations such as the successors to the Nature Conservancy Council, the National Trust, the Biological Records Centre and the Forestry Commission. The JCCBI shares a conservation officer (Helen Smith) with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in Cambridge. The WCMC is partly controlled by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The JCCBI is a long-standing member of Wildlife Link which is the liaison body for the wildlife and conservation organizations in Britain. Hitherto the societies belonging to JCCBI shared the subscription to Wildlife Link between them. The recent changes to NCC have meant that there is now a need for separate Wildlife Link organizations representing England, Scotland and Wales. JCCBI is negotiating to join all three. JCCBI sends a representative to most Wildlife Link meetings to put forward the needs of invertebrate conservation.

BENHS → JCCBI → Wildlife Link → Link meetings with government ministers

At the last full JCCBI meeting it was agreed to widen the field of action of the JCCBI to include all the non-marine invertebrates. This involves inviting the British Arachnological Society, the Conchological Society, the Malacological Society and maybe the Isopod Group and the Myriapod group to join the JCCBI invertebrates. This matter is now being progressed further by the executive subcommittee.

Now, what does JCCBI actually do? Possible threats to our insect populations and/or their habitats are discussed and if they are thought serious such action as seems possible—usually writing to some authority—is taken. Surveys of endangered insects (so far usually Lepidoptera) have been undertaken (often financed by the WWF) and advice on conservation given to landowners. Recently the status of the heath fritillary (*Melitica athalia* (Rott.)), the marsh fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia* (Rott.)) and the high brown fritillary (*Argynnis adippe* (D. & S.)) have been investigated. A survey of the netted carpet moth (*Eustroma reticulatum* (D. & S.)) has also been undertaken. Paul Waring, the surveys officer, hopes to be able to organize one or two more surveys of endangered moths this year.

The problems raised by the need to keep dead wood, including standing dead wood and its hazardous nature in public places have been extensively discussed but a satisfactory compromise cannot really be said to have been found as yet. The JCCBI was responsible for formulating 'The code for insect collecting' and also 'Insect re-establishment—a code of conservation practice', and it contributed to the *British red data book* (insects).

The Committee takes part in the five-yearly review of species on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), i.e. the species which are considered so endangered that they must not be collected.

One of the benefits of belonging to the JCCBI is, of course, the interchange of information and the making of contacts with other naturalists' organizations.